

MORITZ S. GRAEFRATH

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University of Oklahoma
College of International Studies
729 Elm Ave
Norman, OK 73019

Email: graefrath@ou.edu
Website: moritz-graefrath.com

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

University of Oklahoma <i>David L. Boren College of International Studies</i> Wick Cary Assistant Professor of International Security	2025 – present
William & Mary <i>Global Research Institute</i> Postdoctoral Fellow in Security and Foreign Policy	2024 – 2025
European University Institute <i>Department of Political and Social Sciences</i> Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellow	2023 – 2024
Harvard Kennedy School & MIT <i>Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs & MIT Security Studies Program</i> Grand Strategy, Security, and Statecraft Fellow	2022 – 2023

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame Ph.D., Political Science M.A., Political Science	2023 2019
University of Bayreuth B.A., Philosophy & Economics	2016

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

6. “A Tale of Two Pressures: Islamic Law States and the Timing of Litigation” (with Emilia Justyna Powell and Benedikt A. Graf), *Islamic International Law and Global Affairs*, forthcoming.
5. “The False Peril of Great Power Retrenchment: Types of Strategic Withdrawals and Their Consequences,” *European Journal of International Security*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (August 2025), pp. 331-349. [\[Link\]](#)

4. "Concepts in Context: Ontological Coherence in Political Science Research" (with Marcel Jahn), *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (January 2025), pp. 24-60. [\[Link\]](#)
3. "Power Vacuums in International Politics: A Conceptual Framework," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (January 2025), pp. 90-107. [\[Link\]](#)
2. "Political Spaces Beyond the Nation State: The Global Commons in International Security Studies" (with Marcel Jahn), *Global Studies Quarterly*, Vol 4, No. 4 (October 2024), ksae087. [\[Link\]](#)
1. "Conceptualizing Interstate Cooperation" (with Marcel Jahn), *International Theory*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 2023), pp. 24-52. [\[Link\]](#)

Policy Analysis & Commentary

"America's Allies Should Go Nuclear: Selective Proliferation Will Strengthen the Global Order, Not End It" (with Mark Raymond), *Foreign Affairs*, November 19, 2025. [\[Link\]](#)

"Trump Needs to Get Real(ist)," *The Critic*, November 19, 2025. [\[Link\]](#)

"The End of Transatlanticism," *The Critic*, July 24, 2025. [\[Link\]](#)

"Eisenhower's Vision of European Security," *Engelsberg Ideas*, May 20, 2025. [\[Link\]](#)

"For Europe, U.S. Retrenchment Is Not a Threat, But an Opportunity," *Internationale Politik Quarterly*, May 13, 2025. [\[Link\]](#)

"The German Election and the Future of U.S.-European Relations," *Lawfare*, February 27, 2025. [\[Link\]](#)

"Interview: U.S. Troop Withdrawals from Europe Won't Benefit Its Rivals," *The Insider* with Erin O'Brien, October 10, 2024, *War on the Rocks* Podcast. [\[Link\]](#)

"U.S. Troop Withdrawals from Europe Won't Benefit Its Rivals," *War on the Rocks*, September 30, 2024. [\[Link\]](#)

Book Reviews

"Review of David A. Lake, *Indirect Rule: The Making of US International Hierarchy*," *International Studies Review*, forthcoming.

"Review of William D. James, *British Grand Strategy in the Age of American Hegemony*," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 37, No. 6 (2024), pp. 913-915. [\[Link\]](#)

BOOK PROJECT

Power Vacuums in Great Power Politics: The End of Hegemony and Its Aftermath

— Winner, 2024 [John McCain Dissertation Award](#), Munich Security Conference

— Honorable Mention, 2025 [Nuno P. Monteiro Best Dissertation Award](#), APSA IR Theory Section

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Articles under Review

“Were the Appeasers Irrational Thinkers? Revisiting the ‘Guilty Men’ of Interwar Britain”

“The Normative Legitimacy of International Institutions and its Sociological Foundations” (with Marcel Jahn)

“Collective Intentionality in International Relations: The Case for Reductive Realism” (with Marcel Jahn)

Articles in Preparation

“The Post-Soviet Power Vacuum and the Causes of NATO Expansion”

“Why Preventive Wars Fail”

“Taking Security Governance Seriously: Towards a Typology of Security IOs” (with Stephanie Hofmann)

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AFFILIATIONS

Fellowships

GRI Postdoctoral Fellowship, William & Mary (\$58,000)	2024 – 2025
Nonresidential Fellowship, Institute for Global Affairs at Eurasia Group (\$4,000)	2025
Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellowship, EUI (\$25,000)	2023 – 2024
Predocutorial Fellowship, Harvard Kennedy School and MIT (\$55,000)	2022 – 2023
Presidential Fellowship in the Social Sciences, University of Notre Dame (\$29,000)	2017 – 2022
Nanovic Graduate Fellowship, Nanovic Institute for European Studies (\$2,000)	2019 – 2021

Grants

Conference Presentation Grant, Notre Dame International Security Center	2023
Annual Meeting Travel Grant, American Political Science Association	2023
Conference Presentation Grant, Notre Dame International Security Center	2021
Conference Presentation Grant, Notre Dame Graduate Student Government	2021
Early Career Network Access Fund, Political Studies Association	2020
Event Grant, Notre Dame Graduate Student Union	2019
Downes Memorial Fund Professional Development Grant, University of Notre Dame	2019
Conference Presentation Grant, Notre Dame International Security Center	2019
International Visitor Grant, Political Studies Association	2019
Research Grant, Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies, University of Notre Dame	2019
Hayek Fund for Scholars Grant, Institute for Humane Studies, George Mason University	2018

Conference Presentation Grant, Notre Dame International Security Center	2018
Annual Meeting Travel Grant, American Political Science Association	2018
Conference Presentation Grant, Notre Dame Graduate Student Government	2018
PROMOS Study Abroad Scholarship, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)	2015

Affiliations

Nonresident Fellow, Institute for Global Affairs at Eurasia Group	2025 – present
Affiliate Scholar, Nanovic Institute for European Studies	2023 – present
Graduate Student Fellow, Notre Dame International Security Center	2019 – 2023
Graduate Student Fellow, Nanovic Institute for European Studies	2019 – 2021

PRESENTATIONS

Academic Conferences

20. “The Normative Legitimacy of International Institutions and Its Sociological Foundations,” International Studies Association Annual Conference, Columbus, OH 2026
19. “The Normative Legitimacy of International Institutions and Its Sociological Foundations,” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Vancouver, Canada 2025
18. “Rethinking International Order and Great Power Decline,” Security and Foreign Policy Initiative Conference, William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA (virtual) 2025
17. “Does Retrenchment Cause Power Vacuums? Conceptual Ambiguities, Strategic Consequences,” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA 2024
16. “Does Retrenchment Cause Power Vacuums? Conceptual Ambiguities, Strategic Consequences,” Max Weber Conference, European University Institute, Florence, Italy 2024
15. “Does Retrenchment Cause Power Vacuums? Conceptual Ambiguities, Strategic Consequences,” SOSH International Security Seminar, United States Military Academy, West Point, NY (virtual) 2024
14. “Why Retrenchment Rarely Inspires Military Interventions: Lessons from the Cold War,” Società Italiana di Scienza Politica Annual Conference, Genoa, Italy 2023
13. “The Global Consequences of Retrenchment: Power Vacuums in Great Power Politics,” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA 2023
12. “Political Spaces Beyond the Nation State: The ‘Global Commons’ in Security Studies,” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA 2023
11. “The Consequences of Retrenchment and Collapse: Great Power Responses to Power Vacuums,” New-Wave Realism Conference, Mershon Center, The Ohio State University (virtual) 2023
10. “Forgot About Clausewitz? The Politics of U.S. Strategy towards Germany in WWII, 1943-45,” ISSS-IS Annual Conference, Bloomington, IN 2021

9. "Power Vacuum Politics and the Origins of the Cold War in Europe," American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (virtual) 2021
8. "Power Vacuum Politics and the Origins of the Cold War in Europe," Transatlantic Studies Association Annual Conference (virtual) 2021
7. "A Tale of Two Pressures: Islamic Law States and the Timing of Litigation," International Studies Association Annual Conference (virtual) 2021
6. "How Rare Are Rational Thinkers in International Politics?" (*cancelled due to COVID-19*), Political Studies Association Annual International Conference, Edinburgh, UK 2020
5. "Power Vacuums in International Politics," ISSS-IS Annual Conference, Denver, CO 2019
4. "Uncertainty in Anarchy and Hierarchy," Political Studies Association Annual International Conference, Nottingham, UK 2019
3. "Uncertainty in Anarchy and Hierarchy," Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL 2019
2. "Uncertain Men: British Assessments of Nazi Germany's Intentions," ISSS-IS Annual Conference, West Lafayette, IN 2018
1. "Uncertain Men: British Assessments of Nazi Germany's Intentions," American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA 2018

Invited Talks

10. "The Normative Legitimacy of International Institutions and Its Sociological Foundations," Workshop in Political Philosophy, Stockholm University, Sweden (virtual) 2025
9. "Assessment of the National Defense Landscape," 2025 Symposium of the Oklahoma Aerospace and Defense Innovation Institute (OADII), Oklahoma City, OK 2025
8. "Do Nations Abhor a Vacuum? Power Vacuum Politics and the End of British Hegemony in the Middle East," Washington & Lee University, Lexington, VA 2024
7. "The False Peril of Great Power Retrenchment: Strategic Withdrawals and Their Consequences," Grand Strategy Workshop, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK (virtual) 2024
6. "Power Vacuums in Great Power Politics: The Consequences of Retrenchment and Collapse," Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, MA 2023
5. "When Empires Fall: Explaining U.S. Strategy towards the Japanese Power Vacuum after WWII," Holy Cross College, Notre Dame, IN 2022
4. "Power Vacuum Politics and the Origins of the Cold War in Europe," Nanovic Institute for European Studies, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 2021
3. "Theorizing the International Politics of Power Vacuums," International Relations Theory Colloquium (virtual) 2020
2. "Power Vacuums in International Politics," Summer Graduate Research Workshop, Institute for Humane Studies, Bryn Mawr, PA 2019

1. “The Devil You Don’t Know: Uncertainty, Balancing Intensity, and Deterrence Failure,” 2018
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Specialized Training

Foreign Policy Impact Summer Institute Colorado State University	2025
Summer Workshop on the Analysis of Military Operations and Strategy (SWAMOS) Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University	2021
The Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR) Center for Qualitative and Multi-Method Inquiry, Syracuse University	2021
Winter School in Methods and Techniques European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)	2020

Other Workshops

Summer Graduate Research Workshop Institute for Humane Studies, Bryn Mawr, PA	2019
Berlin Seminar in Transnational European Studies University of Notre Dame and University of Georgia, Berlin, Germany	2019

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Courses

U.S. Foreign Relations	S26
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Undergraduate Courses

Great Power Politics	S25, S26
Global Security	F25
The Causes of War	F25
IR Theory and History: Europe, 1919–1939	S21
Intentions in Philosophy and International Politics	F19

Undergraduate Research Assistant Training

Kylie Davis (University of Oklahoma ‘27)
Madison Cleavinger (William & Mary ‘25)
Olivia Ostrowski (William & Mary ‘25)

TEACHING AWARDS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Max Weber Teaching Certificate Max Weber Programme, European University Institute	2024
Excellence in Teaching Award Department of Political Science, University of Notre Dame	2020
Striving for Excellence in College and University Teaching Certificate Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Notre Dame	2019

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

International Relations Expert and Academic Advisor for the Game “World Order” Hegemonic Project Games (start-up board game publishing company)	2023 – 2025
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DEPARTMENTAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Journal Reviewer <i>International Security</i> <i>International Theory</i> <i>Journal of Global Security Studies</i> <i>Security Studies</i>	
Book Reviewer <i>De Gruyter</i>	
Member, Graduate Studies Committee College of International Studies, University of Oklahoma	2025
Prize Jury Member, 2025 Student Research Competition Global Research Institute, William & Mary	2025
Co-Organizer, <i>Power Vacuums and Power Competition</i> Conference Security and Foreign Policy Initiative, William & Mary	2024 – 2025
Co-Founder, <i>Europe in the World</i> Project Nanovic Institute for European Studies, University of Notre Dame	2021 – 2022
Graduate Discussant, Emerging Scholars Conference Notre Dame International Security Center, University of Notre Dame	2021 – 2022
Elected President of the Political Science Graduate Organization University of Notre Dame	2020 – 2021
Co-Founder and -Organizer, Annual European Studies Student Conference Nanovic Institute for European Studies, University of Notre Dame	2019 – 2020
Founder and Organizer, International Relations Workshop University of Notre Dame	2019 – 2020
Elected International Relations Field Representative Political Science Graduate Organization, University of Notre Dame	2019 – 2020

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Languages German (native), English (fluent), Italian (beginner)
Software R, \LaTeX , MS Office, WordPress

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association (APSA)
European International Studies Association (EISA)
International Studies Association (ISA)
Società Italiana di Scienza Politica (SISP)

REFERENCES

Sebastian Rosato

Professor of Political Science
University of Notre Dame
+1 (574) 631-0378
srosato@nd.edu

Stephanie C. Hofmann

Professor and Joint Chair in International Relations
European University Institute
+39 55 4685 985
stephanie.hofmann@eui.eu

Michael J. Tierney

Hylton Professor of Government and International Relations
William & Mary
+1 (757) 221-1468
mjtier@wm.edu